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Agenda Items 124 and 71 (b)

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.28 as revised

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 39th meeting, on 10 November 2005, the Third Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.28, as orally revised. The Committee had before it the programme budget implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.3/60/L.58.

2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 4, 5, 6, 8 and 11 of draft resolution A/C.3/60/L.28, the General Assembly would:

(a) Decide that the Ad Hoc Committee should hold, within existing resources, prior to the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, two sessions in 2006, one of 15 working days from 16 January to 3 February, in order to achieve a complete reading of the draft text of a convention prepared by the Chairman of the Committee, and one of 10 working days from 7 to 18 August;

(b) Underline the importance of further strengthening cooperation and coordination between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat in order to provide technical support to the work of the Committee, and invite them to provide, in advance of the meetings of the Committee, background

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documentation to assist Member States and observers in the negotiation of a draft convention and to organize, in close connection and timing with the meetings and venue of the Committee, meetings of experts and seminars in relation to the draft convention, within existing resources;

(c) Request the Secretary-General to continue to provide the Committee with the facilities necessary for the performance of its work, and in that context invite the Secretary-General to reallocate resources to the United Nations Programme on Disability so as to provide support to the negotiations on a draft convention;

(d) Request the Secretary-General to explore and implement innovative measures, within existing resources and in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities and the Bureau of the Committee, for the provision of selected documents of the Committee in formats accessible to participants with visual and hearing disabilities;

(e) Request the Secretary-General to disseminate widely to non-governmental organizations all available information on accreditation procedures, modalities and supportive measures for their participation in the work of the Committee, as well as the criteria for the financial assistance that is available through the voluntary fund.

3. In accordance with operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution, the Committee would hold its seventh session for 15 working days in New York from 16 January to 3 February 2006 and its eighth session for 10 working days from 7 to 18 August 2006. During each session, two meetings would be held per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, with interpretation services in all six languages. Documentation requirements for the seventh session are estimated at 70 pages of pre-session, 3 pages of in-session and 75 pages of post-session documentation; for the eighth session, requirements are estimated at 2 pages of pre-session, 50 pages of in-session and 100 pages of post-session documentation, to be issued in all six languages.

4. Servicing of the Committee has been included in the draft calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 2006,[1] which has been submitted to the General Assembly for approval. The two sessions proposed for 2006 would comprise 50 meetings, that is, 10 meetings more than the number held by the Committee in 2005. The total number of pages of documentation for the seventh and eighth sessions is estimated at 300 pages, which is 250 pages less than the total documentation requirements in 2005.

5. The 15 working days for the seventh session called for in the draft resolution would require an additional week for the seventh session of the Committee over the estimates included in the draft calendar of conferences and meetings. Therefore, the adoption of the draft resolution gives rise to conference-servicing costs for the additional week of meetings of the seventh session of the Committee estimated at $118,400.

6. In connection with the phrases "within existing resources" and "reallocate resources" as mentioned in paragraphs 2 (b), (c) and (d) above, the attention of the Third Committee was drawn to the provision of section VI, of General Assembly

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 32* (A/60/32), annex B.

resolution 48/248 B, in which the Assembly reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, and also reaffirmed the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

7. Provision has been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 for substantive servicing of the Ad Hoc Committee. It is expected that an additional daily subsistence allowance in the amount of $29,000 would be required to provide for the attendance of 15 participants at the Committee meeting in New York, which will be funded through voluntary contributions. With regard to the organization of meetings of experts and seminars in relation to the draft convention, it is also anticipated that the associated costs would be funded through voluntary contributions.

8. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 and 42/211 a contingency fund is to be established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures were proposed that exceeded the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned would be implemented only through the redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modification of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities would have to be deferred to a later biennium.

9. Additional provisions of $118,400 (representing $111,400 for section 2 and $7,000 for section 28D of the proposed programme budget) would be required over and above the resources initially proposed for the biennium 2006-2007, for servicing of the additional week of meetings of the seventh session of the Ad Hoc Committee. It is not possible at this stage to identify activities within sections 2 and 28D of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during the biennium to meet the total additional requirement of $118,400. This would represent a charge against the contingency fund and, as such, would require appropriations for the biennium 2006-2007 to be approved by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session.